

STRANDINGS

Is it more common for dolphins to ingest recreational fishing gear or become entangled in it?

According to stranding data from 2001 – 2006 in Florida, it appears that there are more cases of dolphins ingesting gear than solely becoming entangled in gear. There are several cases where dolphins have ingested gear and been entangled at the same time.

What other factors cause dolphins to strand?

There are really more questions than answers about why marine mammals come ashore. Dolphins strand because they are sick, injured, or disoriented. If they strand dead, it may be a result of natural causes, illness, or injuries. Naturally occurring toxins, such as red tide, have also been implicated in dolphin strandings.

For more information about NOAA's Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program, visit: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/.

What should you do if you entangle or see an entangled/injured or stranded dolphin?

In the state of Florida, call 1-888-404-FWCC (3922). A volunteer network of authorized stranding response teams and dolphin hospitals will work to save the live animals and learn as much as possible from the dead animals.

For other states, please visit: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/networks.htm#southeast for the appropriate stranding number to call in your area.